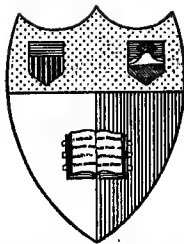


The ~~WINDMILL~~
FLEEING NYMPH
and other verse



Lloyd Mifflin



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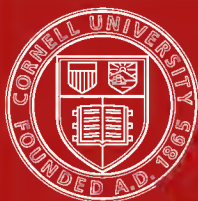
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THE FLEEING NYMPH

AND OTHER VERSE

BOOKS BY LLOYD MIFFLIN

THE HILLS

Page 8x10. With eight reproductions from pen drawings
by Thos. Moran, N.A.

Privately Printed, 1896

AT THE GATES OF SONG

Illustrated with ten reproductions in half-tone after draw-
ings by Thos. Moran, N.A. First and second editions.

Estes & Lauriat, Boston, 1897

Third edition revised and printed from new plates, with
portrait.

Henry Frowde, London, 1901

THE SLOPES OF HELICON AND OTHER POEMS

With eight illustrations by Thos. Moran, N.A., and with
two by the author.

Estes & Lauriat, Boston, 1898

ECHOES OF GREEK IDYLS

Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1899

THE FIELDS OF DAWN AND LATER SONNETS

Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1900

AN ODE ON MEMORIAL DAY

Written and delivered at the request of the G. A. R.

Out of Print

ODE ON THE SEMI-CENTENNIAL OF

FRANKLIN AND MARSHALL COLLEGE, 1903

The Hoffer Press, 1903

BIRTHDAYS OF DISTINGUISHED 18TH CENTURY AMERICANS

With poetical quotations

The Levytype Co., Philada., 1897

CASTALIAN DAYS

Fifty sonnets, with photogravure portrait.

Henry Frowde, London and New York, 1903

THE FLEEING NYMPH AND OTHER VERSE

Small, Maynard & Co., Boston, 1905

COLLECTED SONNETS

Being a selection of 350 of the Author's Sonnets

In Press, 1905

MY LADY OF DREAM

In Preparation

THE FLEEING NYMPH

AND OTHER VERSE

BY

LLOYD MIFFLIN



Boston
Small, Maynard & Company
1905

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TO

EDWARD ROBESON TAYLOR

DEAN OF HASTINGS COLLEGE OF THE LAW
SAN FRANCISCO

MY DEAR DR. TAYLOR,

To you who partly turned from Æsculapius that you might embrace Blackstone, and while you teach the Law, yet continue to worship in the Temple of the Muses; to you who love the Sonnet, and who gave us "Les Trophées" of Heredia rendered into English; to you who dedicated to me one of your own volumes of Verse, and who were among the very foremost to welcome, in no half-hearted way, my earlier poetical work; to you with whom I have long corresponded touching matters Pierian,—to you it is—without your knowledge or consent—that I now dedicate this my latest volume of Poems.

Very sincerely yours,

NORWOOD,
November, 1904.

LLOYD MIFFLIN.

PREFATORY

Alfred Lord Tennyson complained very justly that it was the custom nowadays among readers to find in every poem a part of the biography of the poet. He asserted that his own poems had a very different origin. He asked that the reader attribute to the poet at least a small share of imagination, and begged him to consider a poem as a work of art which might have its origin in a single word—in less than a word—in some intangible gleam, or in the creative faculty rather than in the narrow personal experience of an individual.

L. M.

Norwood,

September 15, 1904.

CONTENTS

THE FLEEING NYMPH	-	-	-	1
"O TENDER LIGHT"	-	-	-	13
AT SUNSET ON CHRISTMAS DAY	-	-	-	14
THE COMING OF MAY -	-	-	-	15
SHE PLEADS AT THE DOOR	-	-	-	16
THE MEADOWLARK -	-	-	-	18
IN THE GLOAMING -	-	-	-	21
THE EVENING STAR	-	-	-	22
A WOMAN'S PLAINT		-	-	23
THE WALK IN YOUTH		-	-	24
THE HELPERS -	-	-	-	26
"WHEN THE AFTERNOON IS OLD"	-	-	-	27
TO THE IRIS -	-	-	-	28
ISEULT -	-	-	-	30
THE GIVER -		-	-	32
TWO IN A GARDEN -		-	-	33
RETURN O SPRING	-		-	34
A MIDNIGHT CHORD -	-	-	-	36
SONNET -	-	-	-	38
REPROACHFUL GHOSTS -		-	-	40
FIDELIA -	-	-	-	41
SANCTUARY -	-	-	-	42
"AMID THE NEW-MOWN HAY"	-	-	-	44
IN THE VALE OF DREAMS	-	-	-	46
"THE FROZEN FIELDS"	-	-	-	48

"PEACE TO THE BRAVE"	-	-		50
TO BEATRICE	-	-	-	55
HALE AT EIGHTY	-		-	56
THE OLD PORCH	-			57
HERBERT SPENCER	-	-		58
THE CARYATIDES OF THE RUINED FANE			-	59
PHAON SPEAKS OF SAPPHO			-	60
AGE AND THE POETS	-	-	-	62
THE CHRISTMAS CARDINAL	-	-	-	63
REVERIE	-			64
THE UNREGARDED				66
"DORA ON THE STEPPING STONES"				67
THE SUNSET DOORS	-	-	-	68
A LADY OF LONG AGO			-	71
"THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE WORLD AMISS"				72
"THE NIGHTINGALE UPON THE ROSE"			-	74
THE LAST LOOK	-		-	75
HE ASKS OF THE WIND	-	-	-	76
O DAYS AGONE	-	-	-	78
"DRAW CLOSER, O YE TREES"			-	80
THE GREY PROCESSION	-	-	-	83
AT EVENTIDE	-	-	-	90

THE FLEEING NYMPH

AND OTHER VERSE

THE FLEEING NYMPH

YOUNG PAN TELLS OF THE NYMPH SYRINX

I am the rough and ruddy-visaged son
Of that fair Dryad and the wily god
With wingèd feet, who as a babe, once stole
The oxen of Admetus ;—I am he
The sylvan Piper, whose keen eyes have watched
Those frolic beauties sired by the Fauns,
Dancing to cymbals ; and brown bacchic girls
Grape-drowsy in the dusk of ilex-groves
In deep Arcadian dells. Full many a sight
Lives in this brain of Naiad's wreathèd arms,
Of gleaming shoulder plashed with waterfalls,
And twinkling ankle seen in myrtle glooms.

But rarest the remembrance of that chase,—
That rush among the Ladon's myriad reed,—
To clasp the paragon of maiden bloom !
O, unapproached she was of all the Nymphs

For rosy whiteness of smooth-flowing limbs,
For rippled wealth of amber-colored hair,
And that prized beauty of the meeting brows,—
The maid, who near the margin, stirred my blood
One sultry noon in summer !

Prone, at mine ease,
And dozing there, I watched the shimmering heat
Dazzle the meads and make the dittany tremble ;
While near my side the honey-laden bees
Buzzed in the pollened calyx, lazily,
And from the uplands faint I heard and far,
An idle shepherd droning out his song.
Meanwhile a goat amid laburnum stopped
His browsing,—stamped, and moved a listening ear
I looked, and lo, the beauteous vision came !
Enthralled I mused, ‘ Surely the teeming earth
That brings forth loveliness in mortal form
This marvel never moulded ! She must be
Some rare effulgence from the loin of gods

By nothing earthly mothered. Ah perchance
Some pallid Hebe from her pedestal,
Flushed into life with ichor from on high,
Now leaves the marble for mortality
Like her who from her ivory prison fled
And blossomed to the lonely sculptor's bride.
But no! a Naiad radiant in her bloom
She came, light-footed like a goddess born,
Slow floating toward me, while the ambient air
Throbbled amorous as she moved. She nearer drew
And beauty filled the silence, as the song
Of Philomela floods the grove at eve.
A snow-drift tinged by sunset, roseate-pale
She poised, a bud of perfect virginhood
Dazzling the senses until all of life
Fused, and swept throbbing through the veins, and ran
Riotous on . . . Oh, fit for Jove she seemed!
And, as a spur to conquest, maiden pride

Dwelt in her face ; and scorn, made beautiful
By youth, sat on her curvèd lips and smiled.

I dropped my crook and on the fawn-skin crouched
And waited in the umbrage till she passed ;
Then pushing back the sedgy galingale
That screened me from her glances, out I leap't
To clasp the prize, but she—a startled fawn—
Fled like a breath within the rushes tall,—
A white Limoniad flitting through the green !

These feet ne'er loved the maris, but I plunged
Sheer through the gravelly shallows, golden-brown,
Plashing the Ladon into silver spray,—
On—on ! where e'er the tussocks trembled—on !
I, eager, out upon the marge beyond
Rapidly by the rippling River, ran
In swift pursuit. As often in the chase
A hound, pursuing close the frightened doe,
Through avid anticipation of his prey

Fangs the soft flank before the fawn is touched,
So I, pre-gathering in mine eager arms
Herself, inhaled the rose's fragrance.
But she, still fleeing, called unto the Nymphs—
The jealous train that guards Diana's rear—
Pleading for aid, but ever as she called,
Winding, I tracked her by her wavering voice
Still silverly entrancing even in fear.
And when these ardent and outstretchèd hands
Almost had clasped the Flower—even then,
Behold ! some adverse potency unseen,—
Some envious god, belike, enveiled in air,
Turned all her body into glimmering reeds ;
Rosy at first they swayed, vibrating still
With tremulant remembrances of her ;
And them I clasped, and held them to my heart,
And warm they were a moment with her life.
Then I—impassioned—angered—foiled, but yet

Yearning with deep importunate desire,
Hungry for even a vestige of herself,
Sheared off the stalks and brought them to my haunt
This pipe I made, that with the seven reeds
Gives forth euphonious music,—named it for her,—
“Syrinx the Sweet,” on which spell-bound I play
By Ladon in the twilight.

Ah, who knows

The fickleness of woman or of gods!
And there are bickerings in the upper world
And flarings round Olympus when the orbs
Of Juno flash green lights of jealousy—
Yea, I have seen it when a child, what time
Of old I trembled on the Olympian floor—
And love, in Nymph or deity, may change
With every changing moon.

What if, in sooth,

She slipped her body from that long lithe grass
To queen it with some god? I know not whom,

Perhaps the ever-young Apollo, he
The frustrate captor of his earliest love,
Foiled of his flame as I am foiled of mine.
Perchance the pair—he and my vanished Nymph
Do even now, as haughty lovers, lie
Empillowed on some couch of fading cloud
Vermilion-dim at dusk . . . It may be so .

Yet she may change, as all things ever change,
Tiring of him, perhaps, resume her shape,
Visit the umber fields of once-loved earth
And come when I am fluting; leave his halls—
If that her beauty star his corridors—
The scarlet portals of his orient fanes
And crumbling glories of illusive eve—
Drawn by my potency, and so return.

Why should she not? I am a god as he,
Fashioned not ill: I am the cosmic symbol,
Similitude of all—earth, star and moon,

And 'neath my ruddiness there dwells a heart
Warm as the sun, as with a god's desire
I chase the virgin, Beauty, through the world.

And thou, O maiden, loveliest of the Nymphs,
Who wast a virgin in the virgin-train
Of ever-chaste Diana—on whose lips
Man may not look and live—even because
Of this—of thine immaculate sweetness,
I am become thy lover, basely not,
For thou art still remembered as a cloud
Whose beauty floating in the April blue
Leaves a white thought for aye, too high to touch
With hands terrene . . . My planet shalt thou be
Hung out of reach in heaven, and on me shed
Nightly celestial influence, till I grow
In love with darkness and the purple gloom
That domes the dusk. Misjudged am I of men,
Who deem me only earth-born, who forget

The starry blazon here upon my breast
That links me to the gods, that lifts my thought
Far in dim temples of ethereal Dream
Beneath whose golden lintels, cloud-begirt,
Mere mortal may not enter. Who shall guess
What thought the godhead harbors? Pure am I
Even as great Nature who herself is pure,
Though petty man, purblinded by his creeds,
Swear she be foul. All things I love—adore—
Nor is there high nor low; the gods have made
Cosmos and creature—made them good and pure.
But purest thou! O Nymph, desired of me,
Who now, alas, so far withdrawn away
Thou seemest but a phantom of desire,
Some form of loveliness dim-seen ere dawn
And half believed a shadow. Come! arise!
Reveal thy beauty even as a dream
Unfolds, or as the goddess of the morn
Breaks through the empearlèd barriers and appears,

So thou, part the thin cloud that veils thyself
And burst upon me, an auroral flower !

For I am worthy that thou shouldst return,
Worthy and potent, and my word revered :
When on the summit of Lycæus high,
Sacred to me, my rites and festivals—
The vast of Peloponnesus at my feet—
Did I not, godlike, give my oracles
To mute-mouthed shepherd-hosts of Arcady
Who, hearing, bent in awe? Talon and tooth
Obey me ; omnipresent is my voice,
And on the utmost headland, far and lone,
The huddled herdsmen tremble when I speak.

Was I not loved, although in vain, by her,
The beauteous daughter of the Earth and Air,
Whom Hera, striding 'mid her peacocks, wroth,
Drave from Olympus for a sweet deceit
And demi-reft her of her limpid voice

Leaving it lovelier after? Did she not,
When I would hail her in the evening glen,
Answer from rocky caves,—retreat, and call
With the soft cadence of a lover's voice,
Till passion wore her body to a sound
Sweet as the mavis in a sister dell?

Was I not loved of Pitys, loveliest Nymph,
Whom the wild Wind-god in his jealous rage,
Blew from the Arcadian precipice to death
And perpetuity, and where, e'en now
Her delicate spirit lingers in the pine
Whispering her ardor to me through the gloom?

But thou, O Syrinx! Later Sweetness, Thou!
If that thou lookest from his doors of pearl,
Return, return to these Ladonian dells,
Through these Ladonian dells return to me—
To me, more ardent than that stripling youth
Whose lily-fingers linger on his lyre

In tedious murmurs every eve and morn !

.

Lost though she be, yet ever do I note

Her voice within the hollows of my pipe—

My flute that whispers of the Nymph I loved :

And while the twilight lingers in the West,

And croons the bittern in the crimsoned pool ;

When airs from out the marshes move the sedge

Stirring the borders to melodious sighs,

Then, as the darkness gathers and I look

Deep in the dusky reeds, I seem to hear

Her breathings through the gloaming, and to see

Her beauty glimmer like a silver star.

"O TENDER LIGHT"

O dreamful woodland gaunt with age !
Deserted, desolate leaf-strewn ways !
Your pathos now can ill assuage
The pang that comes from other days ;

O faded grasses, paled with frost,
That mark the course of frozen streams,
As poems writ when love is lost
Show the hushed poet's buried dreams ;

O tender light that gently grieves
O'er phantom uplands, ghostly gray,
And on the waste of evening leaves
Pale ashes of the dying day :

Ah, fading light ! Oh, fallen leaf !
Ah, frozen fields love made divine !
Ye seem but a season's grief,
But Oh ! the endlessness of mine !

AT SUNSET ON CHRISTMAS DAY

My heart was heavy as I heard
The requiem of the dying year ;
There was no welcome carol of the bird ;
My spirit felt the far off knell—
Hope's ruined chimes that tolled farewell
In vales of dawn now dark and sere.

The sombre Winter day was done ;
Fluttered the fallen, withered leaf ;
God veiled his splendor in the setting sun,
Yet, as I gazed, I seemed to hear
A paeon from some distant sphere—
A strain beyond the touch of grief !

THE COMING OF MAY

How fast thou growest weak, O Winter gaunt,
 Since March, the herald, came !
The sloping lawn thou still, at times, dost haunt
Where cohorts of the canna used to flaunt
 Their crimson oriflamme.

O bed of flowers dormant by the firs,
 Break from your long repose !
I feel a Presence and the earth is hers,
For underneath the frozen pallor stirs
 The red heart of her rose :

I hear the footfalls of her naked feet
 Far to the south away ;
From lonely dells she comes our dells to greet
Thridding the violet slopes, demurely sweet,
 Crowned with the blooms of May !

SHE PLEADS AT THE DOOR

O suffer me now—even me—with this alabaster of nard
which I bring,

To enter the house of the feast ;

The pride of my beauty low on the floor in scorn do I
fling,

I, who am least of the least.

I followed the path that is strewn with the fiery flowers
of sin

Afar through the youthful years,

But am drawn of my soul to His side—bar me not—I
beseech ! let me in,

I would bathe His feet with my tears ;

And penitent, wipe them again with the desolate wealth
of my hair,

And anoint them with spikenard sweet ;

I am weighted with love—with the sorrow of loving,
with shame and despair,—
Let me kneel, I would kiss His feet!

THE MEADOWLARK

TO THE MEMORY OF THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD

Minstrel of melody,
How shall I chant of thee,
Floating in meadows athrill with thy song?
Fluting anear my feet,
Tender, and wildly-sweet—
Oh, could thy spirit to mortal belong!
Tell me thy secret art,
How thou dost touch the heart,
Hinting of happiness still unpossessed;
Say, doth thy bosom burn
Vainly as mine, and yearn
Sadly for something that leaves it unblessed?

Doth not that piercing tone,
Over the clover blown,
Flow from a sorrow—a longing in vain?

Or, is it joy intense,
So like a pang, the sense
Knows not thy happy note from one of pain ?
Others may cleave the steeps,
Soar, and in upper deeps
Sing in the heaven's blue arches profound ;
But, thou most lowly Thing,
Teach me to keep my wing
Close to the breast of our Mother, the ground !

Soon shall my fleeting lay
Fade from the world away—
Thine, ever-during, shall outlast the years ;
Love, who once gladdened me,
Surely hath saddened thee—
Half of thy music is made of his tears !
Long may I hear thy note
Soft through the summer float
Far o'er the field where the wild grasses wave ;

Then, when my day is done,
Mayst thou, at set of sun,
Pour forth thy plaintive note over my grave.

IN THE GLOAMING

Upon the porch deep fell the twilight shade
While yet the crescent lingered in the sky ;
We asked for song,—one took the flute and played
“Good-bye, Sweetheart, good-bye!”

And as the music sent a soft appeal
To fountains of the soul long fancied dry,
We lightly feigned as though we did not feel
“Good-bye, Sweetheart, good-bye!”

The soft notes yearned: uprose the vanished years—
The pleading lips we left without a sigh ;
But still the darkness hid the rising tears—
“Good-bye, Sweetheart, good-bye!”

While women's laughter veiled the silent pain
The player ceased, and laid the rapt flute by :
Oh love—lost love ! must we for ever feign ? . . .
“Good-bye, Sweetheart, good-bye!”

THE EVENING STAR

Away above the cloud-land
In the realm of deep repose
That o'er the sombre vale of evening looms,

Where the petals of the hours
Fall from out the fading rose
The sunset makes to perish as it blooms ;

In the lucent upper spaces
That the amber daylight fills—
The dove-gray dreaming River far above—

The Twilight with her taper,
Dimly poising o'er the hills,
Leans and lights the silver censer named of Love

A WOMAN'S PLAINT

She raised her eyes and dropped a tear :

She pondered on the words she read :

“ Ah, that is not the deepest fear,—

‘ To be forgot when we are dead,’—

But while we breathe, and to them give

Our days, our nights, our being—Oh !

To be forgotten while we live,

That is the bitterness of woe ! ”

THE WALK IN YOUTH

Above the woods at close of day
The amber sky was dim,
Through filmy clouds of faded gray
We saw the crescent slim ;
But lower, past the maple boles,
A pennant of the West
Flamed like a flying oriole's
Intense, refulgent breast.

The dew fell on the clover sweet
In meadows hushed and dark,
And from the grass our happy feet
Drove the late-settled lark ;
While by her side I walked along
Within the gloaming there,
Drawn by her silence—deep as song—
The luring of her hair.

But when we parted at the gate
And stars were in the sky,
My heart within me leaped elate—
A tear was in her eye.
I stepped on air : I sought my home :
The woods were black above,
But every orb within the dome
Thrilled to the chord of love.

THE HELPERS

Not unto him who through inglorious days
Reaches at last his ignominious goal—
The spoils of wealth ; nor him, whose shriveled
soul,
Raised to bad eminence by devious ways,
Exults in that for which his honor pays ;
Nor him, the Warrior, dealing crimson dole,
Though blushing Fame his brutal acts enroll ;
To none of these the laurel and the praise :
But unto them, true helpers of their kind,
Who daily walking by imagined streams
Reap all their wealth in building lines of gold,—
Rare architects of figments and of dreams,
Who, from the plastic and creative mind,
Build their fine nothings in immortal mould.

“WHEN THE AFTERNOON IS OLD”

When the afternoon is old
And the tree-tops are a-flush,
When the deepening, dying gold
Lingers on the sunset thrush;

Then beside the hidden stream,
In the solemn evening air,
Nora, standing in a dream,
Gathers wildings for her hair;

Muses, when the gloaming deep
Dims the pasture far away—
Wending with the homing sheep—
What her lover's lips will say.

So, beside the wimpling stream,
In the solemn evening air,
Nora, standing in a dream,
Wreathes the wildings in her hair.

TO THE IRIS

IN MEMORY OF LONGFELLOW

Delicate Iris ! blooming near the edges
Of this thy Naiad home,
Where the wild brooklet by the rustling sedges
Sings through the troublous foam,

Thou, in reclusive silence cool and sombre,
Beneath the willowed gloom,
With azure torch, where deepest shadows slumber
Dost the dark glen illumine.

Near to the soil, and to the lowly clinging,
Terrestrial in thy birth,
Yet with cerulean color ever bringing
The depth of Heaven to earth.

A herald thou, the vernal days endearing,
With raiment brave bedight,

For aye within thy lifted hand uprearing
The gonfalon of Light ;

Shaming the brutal world of war and plunder
Where ruthless wars increase ;
Rebuking all the savage battle-thunder
With undertone of peace.

Still mayst thou dwell amid the quiet places
Deep in the silent glen,
Afar from all the canker that debases
The sordid haunts of men !

I would not take thee from thy sylvan hiding
O hyacinthine flower,
Yet may thy spirit enter mine, abiding
Until my closing hour !

ISEULT

I

When in the dell of darksome leaves
I saw the wheel the spider weaves
Besprent with drops of crimson dew,
Her fate, or mine, at once I knew.

II

Beneath the moat, within the wild,
They found her,—placid as a child :
Death could not, at his worst, erase
The marble beauty of her face.

III

When by the tarn, distraught with love,
I saw the wheel the spider wove,
I prayed that I might lie beside
That saintliness that was my bride.

IV

All night, in dreams, I wander through
Forests whose branches drip with dew
Whose color is the fearsome red—
Forests whose branches are the dead.

THE GIVER

He gave his all unto the world—

His more than gold :

Disdainfully her lips she curled ;

Her eyes were cold.

Unto her arms he brought his best

As one who knows

He places in a statue's breast

His only rose.

TWO IN A GARDEN

Ah Love, when all the willow-boughs
Put on their misty greens,
And cherries drop their blossomed snows
Anear the nectarines,

You stand in shadow of the bloom
The while your lover speaks,
Where all the wafture sheds perfume
Around your blushing cheeks,

While roving zephyrs kiss your hair
And on your red lips play
Ah Love, have pity ! is it fair
To ward him still away ?

RETURN O SPRING

The River, gorged with melted snows,
Sweeps ruthlessly along,
Not as in June it lipped the rose
And lilted into song.

The hills are robed in sombre hue ;
The frowning cliff is cold ;
O where is all the tender blue,
The glorious green and gold !

Ah, if thou canst, beloved Spring,
Stretch forth thy sunny arm,
Thy balmy airs unto us bring
And all thy wondrous charm,

And burst a-bloom the dormant shoot
By icy creek and run,
And stir the water-lily root
With hope of summer sun,

And unto us, by frozen streams,
Us winter-hearted men,
Bring back the Love—the Youth—the Dreams
That will not come again !

A MIDNIGHT CHORD

PARIS

I

'Twas midnight in the lamp-lit garret room ;
From the rich cello, with impassioned bow,
A rapt soul drew the pathos. Hushed in gloom
They listened, breathless, to the plainting low.

II

Two lovers, mutely clinging hand-in-hand,
Stared at the havoc of the coming years ;
The lonely sculptor from a foreign land
Gave way at last and melted into tears.

III

Then one walked to the window and looked up
Shaken with grief, remembering long-lost lips ;
As memory passed to each her wormwood cup
Youth seemed a phantom over sunken ships.

IV

Then one by one they sought the silent night ;
Each hoarding in the heart a sorrow, veiled ;
Delicious pain had left their faces white,
And still the music, gently poignant, wailed.

SONNET

TO AN OLD VENETIAN PAINTING

Who *was* she—this rare Beauty of appealing face? . . .

The eyes are laden with the weight of Love's fond
burden,

The heart, with tremulous hope of Love's alluring
guerdon.

Had she some wound—some grief which nothing
would erase,—

She whose impassioned look is raised in suppliant
grace?

Perchance some erring penitent in saintly adora-
tion?

Or Doge's wilful daughter offering supplication

In all the sumptuous beauty of her languorous
race?

The plaintive mouth is saddened now from farewell-
taking,

The sob still lingers in her smile,—the eyes brim
o'er,

As if sweet love, with her, had broken faith and
trust.

How *could* such beauty be unless her heart were
breaking? . . .

Peace! draw the veil: seek no revealment: ask
no more:

Such loveliness shall sanctify her very dust.

REPROACHFUL GHOSTS

As glittering galleons, scornful of the shore,
Bound for the Fortunate Isles with favoring breeze
Sink ere they reach their goal, and ever more
Phantom the dim mid-seas :

So, for the ports unknown, at lift of sun,
We sail afar with flaunting pennon high ;
Life whelms us, and the ghosts of deeds undone
Stalk in our evening sky.

FIDELIA

THE BRIDEGROOM SPEAKS

Her hair was amber as the grass that lies

Along the edges of the winter brook ;

As steadfast as her soul the genial look

From the brown depths of earnest eyes.

A sunnier Bride earth ne'er shall see again !

Her smile—a heavenly wave of inner light,

And oh, her tender body was as white

As is the snowdrift in the glen !

.

The frozen world lies pitiless and stark ;

On barren slopes the bitter wind is cold ;

And now the cypress, groping through the mould

Blindly enfolds her in the dark.

SANCTUARY

Lone, desolate reaches of the twilight dunes
Crowned with the wind-bent pine,
Where phantom fingers harp foreboding runes
Learned of the mystic brine.

Wan, ashen pools amid the mournful sands ;
Reeds, —moaning round the brink ;
And through the gloom, the ghost of frantic hands
Appealing, ere they sink.

Great voices, calling from the outer deep,
Imperious, and profound,—
A summons from the eternal caves of sleep
Borne, without sense of sound.

O love ! cling closer in the fading light !
The winds begin to wail,
And many a ship, storm-beaten through the night,
Shall perish in the gale !

Cling closer—closer in the gathering gray !

Let the wild breakers roll !

Safe moored are we within the quiet bay—

Love's harbor of the soul.

“AMID THE NEW-MOWN HAY”

SONG

I

The fragrance of the meadow breeze
 Made sweet the eve of June ;
The sunset kissed the bending trees
 Above the rising moon—
 Above the rising moon.

II

The meadowlark upon her nest
 In silence settled down ;
My true love hid her beating breast
 And drooped her eyes of brown—
 Her love-lit eyes of brown.

III

We roamed amid the new-mown hay
 The while the gloaming fell,

And after dark, ah, who shall say

What tenderness befel—

What tenderness befel !

.

The days have flown : I walk alone :

But oh, upon the air,

The fragrance from the fields new-mown

Is more than heart can bear—

Is more than heart can bear !

IN THE VALE OF DREAMS

I

Ah, yes, as I lie by the rills,
Alone in the shade and am lulled by the woodland notes,
I know that the cradlers are out on the yellow hills
A-cradling the ripening oats
As over the meadow the lark with his carolling floats.

II

And fair to my vision would be
The rythmical reapers a-swaying so supple and strong;
To watch them were sweet from the shadowy dell and
to see
The binders all binding along,
And musical voices to note—a lullaby soft as song!

III

But better illusion than sight,—
With eyes that are closed as in sleep in the shade by
the streams

To hear away-off in the mystical Dale of Delight

The murmur of men and of teams

O'er hills of the Real, afar in the Valley of Dreams!

"THE FROZEN FIELDS"

The frozen fields are wrapped in crusted snow ;
Across the vale and on the rocky height
The pallid sun, through rays of gloom and glow,
Pours an insufferable path of light.

Where are the fleecy clouds of summer's blue ?
The dim-seen swallow madly sailing there ?
The only phantom of a bird in view—
A withered leaf whirled through the wintry air.

Far—far the Naiad of the brook has flown,
Her reeds are tuneless on the icy shore ;
Gleams from the wood, white as Carrara's stone,
The Dorian column of the sycamore.

O'er orchard boughs once filled with bloom and bees
O'er songless thickets hopeless now of June ;
O'er barren hill-tops girt with windy trees,
Hangs the gray remnant of the mid-day moon.

Lone as that moon I wander here and wait,
Wroth at the world for all its cold and gray,
When down the lane my love comes, all elate,
And Winter bursts full-blossomed into May !

"PEACE TO THE BRAVE!"

Written for oral delivery at the request of "The Witness Tree Chapter" of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

I

Peace to the Brave! They do not need our praising,
For in all hearts is treasured every name;
Yet for the future we to-day are raising
A tablet to their fame.

II

And while the trees put on their fading splendors
And droop their banners like to knights of old,
Let Freedom drop a tear for her defenders,
Now crumbled into mould.

III

They are not dead so long as recollection
Triumphantly proclaims their dauntless part;
But they shall live in sanctified affection
Templed within the heart.

IV

If some, perchance, were of a lowly station,
 They are ennobled beyond mortal breath ;
 Co-equal with the proudest of the Nation,—
 Made eminent by Death.

V

O'er those who die for Fame there rests a beauty
 Dimmed by the human craving for renown ;
 But on these patriot brows, the angel Duty,
 Enwreathed her purest crown.

VI

Here their descendants, rapt in veneration,
 In distant days full many an hour shall stand :
 The alien, too, shall bend in adoration
 O'er these who freed a Land.

VII

Sometimes in Spring, with flowers as a token,
 Children of sires as yet unborn, may come,

And place around this shaft, then still unbroken,
Their wreaths of laurel-bloom.

VIII

Far from this vale, the heroes, lone, are lying
In peaceful fields now tilled by happier men ;
The patriots fell, but each dim eye in dying
Looked to these dales again.

IX

Some near the Wissahickon shades are sleeping ;
On far Long Island some as bravely died ;
And sylvan Brandywine has in her keeping
Some whom death glorified.

X

Forget not those—the warriors worn and gory—
Who sought their homes when honored scars were
healed ;
They only lacked the great and crowning glory
Of dying on the field.

XI

Still may the Morning with her roseate finger
 Touch these engraven names with gracious light
 Still may the sunset round this tablet linger,—
 The stars keep watch by night.

XII

O shade the spot, historic oaks centennial,
 Here by the ancient Kirk of Donegal ;
 Ye evergreens, and church-yard pines perennial,
 Stand sentry round the wall !

XIII

O River, with your beauty time-defying,
 Flowing along our peaceful shores to-day,
 Be glad you fostered them—the heroes lying
 Deep in the silent clay !

XIV

Be jubilant, ye hill-tops, old and hoary,—
 Proud that their feet have trod your rocky ways

Rejoice, ye vales, for they have brought you glory
And ever-during praise !

XV

We leave their memory to the hearts that love them
Their sacrifice shall still remembered be ;
The very cloud shall pause, in pride, above them
Who fought to make us free !

XVI

With the long line that files into Death's portal
They pass with honor blazoned on each breast ;
They camp afar, upon the Plains Immortal,
Each in his tent of rest !

TO BEATRICE

Misjudge me not by lyric word
Of lighter vein my lays among :
The saddened soul of love-lorn bird
May yield the sweetest note e'er sung.

Remember where in summer's sheen
Lovers, along the brook we stood,
When all the willow's leaves were green
While all the roots were red as blood.

O trembling lips with dulcet sounds !
O souls that sing yet suffer wrong !
How deep—how deep the bleeding wounds
Beneath the surface of the song !

HALE AT EIGHTY

Though gray December now his life enfold
He wears the bloom of many a summer hour ;
As through drear winter the hydrangeas hold
Their rosy reminiscence of the flower.

THE OLD PORCH

The south-wind touched the poplar leaves
And turned their silver to the sun ;
It bent the bearded harvest sheaves
And swayed the wildings by the run ;

And as it blew, the rocking-chairs
Coquetted gently to and fro,
As if prim Ladies, with their airs,
Were rocking still as long ago.

The breezes of that summer tide
Transfigured all the golden glen,
And by my sweetheart's gentle side
I seemed to wander once again !

HERBERT SPENCER

I

He stood alone ; his work was done :
He faced Eternity
Where Hope once saw her rising sun
Irradiate the sea.

II

With wavering faith he watched profound
The Light of Life withdrawn :
Oh ! may the dark he could not sound
Unfold the perfect Dawn !

THE CARYATIDES OF THE RUINED FANE

THEY SPEAK

Only the blue of Hellas still doth bend
 Unchanged above us ; only the ancient seas
 Murmur, at times, of fallen deities :
 No suppliants at the altar hither wend ;
No longer now the incense doth ascend
 Lingering amid the sculpture in the frieze :
 We bear our burden and the gods appease,
 Saying to man, "Endure unto the end".
The Nations loom, and fade : kings wax and wane :
 Anchored and patient, here we stand alone,
 Eternal symbols, scorning still to swerve.
Time passes as a shadow : we remain
 Immortal and immutable in stone,
 More beautiful than beauty, as we serve.

PHAON SPEAKS OF SAPPHO

Ah, had I only known in those empurpled days,
The power of her passion, the deeps of her desire
That stirred within her heart, ran over into lays,—
The seething pools, the smouldering lakes of secret
fire!

Had I but yielded when she wildly importuned,
Whose hidden hope my hungry soul had not divined,
When, passion-pale, she looked into mine eyes and
swooned,
I might have gathered then for aye that glorious
mind.

For love, in sooth, meant more than life or deathless
fame
To her who long the wandering sea-weed hath en-
furled;

I might have raised from her child-flowers of my name,
And worn upon my breast the rose of all the world.

What joy is mine to be the comeliest of men?

What profits now my beauty, vain and thrown away?

Lonely I ferry here, nor shall I see again

The Lesbian star who turned my night to radiant
day!

AGE AND THE POETS

From poet lips the slow years rob the fire ;
Perchance in youth they sang some sweet refrains
 Then, from the changèd lyre,
 Flowed immelodious strains ;
 As a rapt chorister who having sung
 Divinely while still young,
Makes, at the last, but discord in the choir.

THE CHRISTMAS CARDINAL

When icy pendants drape the eaves
And hungered sparrows tap the pane,
And all the heart of Winter grieves
For wafts of violets once again ;

When sleet with silvery foliage fills
The myriad branches gray with frost,
And through the bended limbs the hills
Loom but the ghost of Summer lost ;

Then might we yearn for sunnier days
When shepherds pipe in lonely vales,
Or long for dusk Illyrian ways
Where Fancy hears her nightingales ;

But when within the fir-tree glooms
The Cardinal's flaming pennon glows,
We rest content,—are not his plumes
The wingèd herald of the rose ?

REVERIE

I sit in the lonely orchard
And the long-lost days recall,
And the hush is only broken
As the crimson apples fall.

O'er the grass, in the sunny places,
And under the flickering shade,
Come the ghosts of the dear companions—
Full many a winsome maid.

For there on the lawn I remember
The hours I dreamed away
With the beauteous girls in Summer
Whose spirits are here to-day.

They seem to be looking for someone
They knew in another time,
And they pass, but they do not know me—
My temples are touched with rime.

But they are as lovely as ever ;

I see them each as of old ;

And Margaret's hair is midnight

And Marion's brown and gold.

Yet unheeding they pass before me,

Their eyes undimmed by tears :

Ah, how could they know me their lover

After the havoc of years !

THE UNREGARDED

Why should the Poet seek to roll
The rhythmic current of his verse along,
Opening the floodgates of his hidden soul ?
The world, alas ! is deaf to Song.

Far o'er the head of all the heedless crowd
Floats the dim sweetness of his word ;
As bells within the turret of a cloud
Tolling at evening, die unheard.

"DORA ON THE STEPPING-STONES"

Dora on the stepping-stones
By the beeches low,
Lured me with endearing tones—
Ah, how long ago !

Beckoned with beseeching eyes :—
" Follow Love ! " they said ;
I, unwitting, spurned the prize,
Followed Fame instead.

Now I haunt the olden place ;
Seek her by the streams ;
But can only find her face
In the Dale of Dreams !

THE SUNSET DOORS

Beauty is liquid and forever flows
Through all the meshes of the net we dip
Into her luring sea. The evening sky
Is but a symbol of inconstancy—
Eternal beauty in eternal change :
Lo, even now, that bright celestial rose,
The full-blown West, slowly her petals folds
Fairer than mortal flower, richer than hues
That golden Titian in Italia dreamed,
Or iridescent Turner ever drew
In rapturous color trances. . . Airy spires,
Domes of dim cities melting into dreams ;
Rivers whose waves, unutterably vague,
Around the lucid islands loitering go
In Orphean murmurs down ethereal shores
Where ne'er immortal footsteps ever fall,
Save those gold hoofs, diurnal, bearing on

Through dusty glory of the chariot wheels,
The bright Hyperion of the beauteous brow
With lyric tresses of resplendent hair
Borne backward by an aura not of earth.
Behold ! adown the highway of the West
His eager coursers cleave the amber slope
Above the crimsoned gates. He passes on
Through scarlet fields ephemerally fair—
He passes on, and all the phantoms fade :
Vistas of aisles immeasurably dim,
Prairies of opal and the pools of pearl ;
Empurpled thrones o'er wastes of barren gold ;
The emblazoned battlements, the serried towers
The glittering legions plumed with gonfalons
And streamers floating in the fulgent air ;
The pomp, the splendor, and the pageantry ;
These frail and evanescent glories —all
Crumble to nothing, and the vacant skies,
Empty of visions as the Nubian sands,

Are blank with glowing light, solemn and still,
From whose unfathomed opulence serene
The palpitating silence throbs intense,
As Twilight with her vast and sombre wings
Broods o'er the darkling world.

A LADY OF LONG AGO

When from the empyrèan of the midnight sky
The queen of heaven on her ebon throne
Touches with mellowing light his lonely bed,
And through the casement high
Silvers the pillow where, alone,
He strives to rest an ever-restless head ;
Then, in the hush of that secluded room
Whence long ago a gentle spirit fled,
He hears the faded, silken raiment stir,
And faintest airs—as of low hovering wings—
Pulse in the throbbing gloom,
And wafts of roses—roses loved of her,
Which she was wont to wear
Wove in the twilight of her hair,
Linger within the chamber till the dawning brings
The unreality of real things.

"THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE WORLD AMISS"

A WOMAN SINGS

There's something in the world amiss

When love seems all in vain :

O would that you could have the bliss

And I could have the pain—

And I could have the pain !

When Sorrow and Adversity

Assault you unto tears,

O lift me up that I may be

The target for their spears—

The target for their spears !

And when the end of life is near

May heaven grant my prayer :

The last to give you farewell here—

The first to greet you there—

The first to greet you there !

There's something in the world amiss

When love seems all in vain :

O would that you could have the bliss

And I could have the pain—

And I could have the pain !

“THE NIGHTINGALE UPON THE ROSE”

The nightingale upon the rose
Sat silent and forlorn,
Nor sang her sweetest strain until
Her breast bled with the thorn.

The shell lay voiceless in the sea ;
Then tossed upon the shore,
A sorrow touched its rosy lips
To song for evermore.

Mute was the Poet till a grief
Smote him with iron thong,
When from his soul melodiously
Flowed the deep wells of song.

THE LAST LOOK

Let fall a tear above the golden head,
For ere this lily bloomed she paled away :
Oh do not call the unopened flower dead
Who found the dark before she felt the day.

HE ASKS OF THE WIND

Spirits of Twilight sighed in the West ;
And far from the lamps of the nestled town
I saw the Wind in the reeds at rest ;
Her faint-blown hair fell over her breast
And her filmy wings were folded down.
Through her beautiful body shone afar
The tremulous light of the evening star ;
And the faintest flutter of heart I heard
As sympathy hears the heart of a bird
That has flown too wide and has come to rest
In shadowed silence about her nest.
And I asked of the Wind in the gloaming there
As over her rested her twilight hair :

“ O Wind in the reeds of the evening furled,
You who have traveled the width of the world,—
For the hidden things unto you are known,—

Where is my long-lost happiness flown? ”
And the Wind of the forest, the Wind of the sea
Answered and said from her soul to me :

“ Over the hills of Illusion fair,
In the tangled gold of a sweet-heart’s hair ;
Lost in the lips you never kissed ;
Gone in the love you scorned and missed ;
In pale hands touching the sobbing keys
Pleading for love through music,—these—
The willing heart and the loving eye,—
These it was that you let go by.”

And fainter her thin voice rippled on,—
“ Where is your long-lost happiness gone ?
Sunk in the depth of yearning eyes ;
Over the hills of Dream it lies
By the gates you closed of Paradise.”

And the wraith of the gentle Wind had flown
And Silence stood in the reeds, alone.

O DAYS AGONE!

We heard the fading Summer's plaintive horn ;
The sultry days were done ;
The fields were tawny with the tasseled corn,
And brown, the beechen run.

A haze enfolded all the dreamful hills,
And round about their feet,
On umber acres moved the far-off drills
Dropping the future wheat.

There was no breath from out the distant dim
The thistle-down to stir ;
We guessed the squirrel on the chestnut-limb
By the falling of the burr.

An Eden-languor of the amber air
Among immurmurous trees—
A glorious orient calm as broodeth there
On alcyonian seas.

A tender love-song floated through the dell
By dear lips fondly sung,
And stirred the silence like a silver bell
In faery belfry rung.

I breathed a lover's burning vows,—since then—
How many a barren year!
Yet still her spirit lingers in the glen
And moves beside me here.

“DRAW CLOSER, O YE TREES”

O quiet cottage room,
Whose casements, looking o’er the garden-close,
Are hid in wildings and the woodbine bloom
And many a clambering rose,

Sweet is thy light subdued,
Gracious and soft, lingering upon my book,
As that which shimmers through the branchèd wood
Above some dreamful nook !

Leaning within my chair,
Through the thin curtain I can see the stir—
The gentle undulations of the air—
Sway the dark-layered fir ;

And, in the beechen green,
Mark many a squirrel romp and chirrup loud ;

While far beyond, the chestnut-boughs between,
Floats the white summer cloud.

Through loopholes in the leaves,
Upon the yellow slopes of far-off farms,
I see the rhythmic cradlers, and the sheaves
Gleam in the binders' arms.

At times I note, near by,
The flicker tapping on some hollow bole ;
And watch upon the elm, against the sky,
The fluting oriole ;

Or, when the day is done,
And the warm splendors make the oak-top flush,
Hear him, full-throated in the setting sun,—
The darling wildwood thrush.

O sanctuary shade
Enfold me round ! I would no longer roam :

Let not the thought of wandering e'er invade
This still, reclusive home !

Draw closer, O ye trees !
Veil from my sight e'en the loved mountain's blue
The world may be more fair beyond all these,
Yet I would know but you !

THE GREY PROCESSION

Rich was the twilight air ;
The ancient trunks of vine-enwreathèd trees
Stood dark against the dying sunset there
Far from the troubled seas.

Pathless the unflowered ground
In that sequestered forest of deep hush ;
And 'mid the under-laurel, not a sound
Lute-throated of the thrush.

Musing at eve, alone,
Within the umbered aisles of such a wood,
I uttered many a soft melodious tone
Soothing the solitude :

Long lines of lyric sweep,
Sonorous cadences of liquid sound

From those dead masters of the Olympian steep
That still to-day resound

Through the dim corridors
Left of the memored temples of old days,—
From that full-voicèd choir that ever pours
Its unapproachèd lays

From out the English prime.
Flashes of stately splendor I unfurled
From him—The Universal of all time—
Peerless throughout the world :

Then Spenser's golden tones
Falling upon the soul with deepening swells,
Clear-heard above the clash of warring thrones
Tolled, soft as twilight bells :

And him who, more profound,
Too near Jehovah's fulgence, dimmed his eyes,

Yet pealed his rolling thunders far around
Hades, and Paradise :

Or him who, sweet and strong,
Within the church-yard in the gloaming wrote
Such opulent strains as make our modern song
Thin, and of meagre note :

The crowned Rydalian sung
Low to himself from many a mountain old ;
Infrequent pearls at intervals were strung
Upon his thread of gold.

Then Shelley's airy lyre
Far o'er the rolling mists of morn I heard
Peal from the blue a strain of keen desire
Like some inspired bird.

And in auroral air,
Wild, haunting numbers thrilled the lifting dark

Unmatched, The Ettrick Shepherd chanted there
His lyric of the Lark.

Entranced I listened, mute,
While from a cloud trembled a silver trill
As youthful Adonais touched a lute
Unrivalled by us still.

I saw the Raven's wings
Sweep through the night, and heard the rhythmic
flow—
That harp of weird and demon-haunted strings—
The slender strain of Poe ;

And many a dreamful lay
From Lotus-land beside the languorous brine,
With Bugle-echoes of his golden day—
The Laureate's limpid line.

And tones that lingered long
Flowed from New England's son, whose delicate
art

Touches the mind with words of hopeful song
That glow within the heart.

The Water-Fowl in flight
Cleaved the dark clouds adown the twilight slope ;
Her poet's symbol pealed athwart the Night
With clarion-voice of Hope.

And verse of smaller men
Who, if less finely, touched as pure a lyre
With tones as welcome to the heart as when
Chants some cathedral choir.

And lingering, still were flung
Word-jewels on the velvet of the night
That burned the darkness like the star that hung
Trembling above with light.

The Present rolled away,
And through the opening of the parted cloud

I saw, in glory of supernal day,
Rare spirits, laurel-browed ;

Then through the ages filed
That grey procession of illustrious dead ;
And all the temples of the mind were aisled
With radiance which they shed ;

While from beyond them came
Faint echoes of a veiled and shadowy throng
With sound of far-off harps, and soft acclaim
From phantom shores of Song.

I mused until the Morn
Breathed all the east into an opal rose,
And from that heart of splendor, outward borne
Where godhead might repose

On dim resplendent thrones
Based with auroral wings of restless fires,—

I heard the plectrum beat the golden tones
From far immortal lyres.

.

Day broadened . . . Harshly came
Coarse plaudits from the World. On bended
knees
A forward crowd kissed the soiled foot of Fame
And she was crowning these.

AT EVENTIDE

As one at twilight, silent and alone,
Pacing through some secluded garden-close,
Notes the ungathered blooms, and sadly knows
How all neglect their fragrance, and disown ;
Sees the parterre with crimson beauty strown,
And where the nodding scarlet deepest glows,
Only the wind's hand take the bending rose,
Where, on unfooted walks, the leaves are blown :

So, wandering through the garden of my rhymes,
Now when the deepening shadows round me fall.....
With darkness coming and the dayspring furled
I see my roses undesired of all ;
They bloom and fade within a heedless world,
And I, remembering, muse upon the times.

NOTES

PAGE 1—In the poem, "The Fleeing Nymph," the author has, in his conception of Pan, followed his own feeling, which coincides with that of some of the older painters—Caracci and others—rather than with the mythologists; that is to say, he has emphasized the human attributes of the god rather than his grotesqueness, which latter quality, to those who miss the symbol, often renders the sylvan deity almost repellant.

PAGE 18.—Acknowledgment is here made to the N. Y. *Independent* for permission to reprint the poem on page 18; and to *Everybody's Magazine* for the poems on pages 22 and 27; and to *The Century Magazine* for permission to use "The Frozen Fields," page 48, in which some alterations have been made.

PAGE 38—The exquisite head here referred to is now in the author's possession and is by an old Italian master.

PAGE 50—Written at the request of The Witness Tree Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution on the occasion of the unveiling of a Cenotaph, October 5, 1899, at Donegal Churchyard, to the memory of the soldiers who enlisted, from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, for the Revolutionary War.

